OPEN WIDE: TOOTH SCHOOL INSIDE

OPEN WIDE: TOOTH SCHOOL INSIDE
by Laurie Keller
Themes: Dental Hygiene, Health, Humor, Learning, School
Ages: 4-10
Running Time: 18 minutes

SUMMARY

This witty movie makes learning about teeth entertaining and interesting. The teacher, Dr. Flossman, has a class of thirty-two teeth, who need to learn about brushing, flossing, plaque, enamel, and … cavities. The hilarious cast of characters includes eight incisors, four canines, eight premolars, twelve molars (including the four wisdom teeth), a bad dentist, and the Tooth Fairy. This movie cleverly intertwines fascinating facts (George Washington's teeth were not made of wood, contrary to popular belief) with humor and fantasy, and will inspire students to brush, floss, and generally care for their pearly whites!

OBJECTIVES

- Students will learn about the importance of dental hygiene.
- Students will identify the different parts of teeth.
- Students will learn the functions of different teeth.

BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Elicit students' background knowledge about teeth and dental hygiene. Use a KWL chart (Know, Want to Know, Learned) to record students' responses. Guiding questions:

- What do you need to do to keep your teeth healthy?
- Why is it important to keep your teeth healthy?
- What kinds of foods are bad for teeth?
- How many teeth do adult humans have?
- What are the jobs of the different types of teeth?

Fill in the Know and Want to Know sections of the chart before viewing the movie. Return to the chart after viewing the movie to fill in the Learned section.

Provide a variety of foods for a "Healthy Teeth Food Sort" game. For example, provide students with samples of fruits, vegetables, sugar cereal, non-sugar cereal, candy, potato chips, milk, cheese, bread, ice cream, and cookies. Challenge them to sort the foods from "best for your teeth" to "worst for your teeth." Alternatively, have them sort the foods into sugary vs. non-sugary. Revisit this activity after viewing the movie to assess whether students learned that some foods that may seem to be terrible for your teeth, such as ice cream, are actually less damaging than potato chips.

AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Return to the KWL chart. Prompt students to share what they learned from the movie. Use the same guiding questions as above, as well as:

- What did you learn from the movie that surprised you?
- What are primary teeth? Why are they important?
- What are cavities? How do they form? How are they treated?
- What are the different parts of a tooth?

Make a diagram of a tooth for students to color. Replicate this diagram onto a wall poster, with each part of the tooth labeled. Have students use the poster to label their own diagrams. List facts for each part of the tooth. For older students, you can make this a cloze exercise, in which they have to fill in the function of each part of the tooth.

Revisit the Healthy Teeth Food Sort. Assess if students remember the part of the movie that lists the foods from "Not Very Sticky" to "Super Sticky". Discuss why some foods, even though they may not taste sweet, still are worse for the teeth because they stick more easily to teeth, consequently attracting more bacteria.

Invite a local dentist or dental hygienist into the classroom to talk to students about dental hygiene and about their career as a dentist. Hopefully these professionals will bring models and visuals that will help students see the effects of poor dental hygiene. Work with students to formulate and practice questions that they can ask to the guests. Encourage them to speak loudly, clearly, and in complete sentences. After the visit, work with students to write thank-you letters.

Put on a dramatic performance, where students are grouped into the different types of teeth. Have each group write a small poem or song that gives information about their type of tooth. Help students make props and costumes. Other characters can include: bacteria, a toothbrush, floss, and toothpaste. Put on a performance for other students and parents.

OTHER WESTON WOODS PRODUCTIONS ABOUT HEALTHY BODIES INCLUDE:

Chicken Soup with Rice, by Maurice Sendak
Dem Bones, by Bob Barner

OTHER WESTON WOODS PRODUCTIONS ABOUT SCHOOL INCLUDE:

Chrysanthemum, by Kevin Henkes
Diary of a Worm, by Doreen Cronin, ill. by Harry Bliss
Emily's First 100 Days of School, by Rosemary Wells
Monty, by James Stevenson
Shrinking Violet, by Cari Best, ill. by Giselle Potter
The Teacher from the Black Lagoon, by Mike Thaler, ill. by Jared Lee
Will I Have A Friend? by Miriam Cohen, ill. by Lillian Hoban

TO ORDER OTHER WESTON WOODS PRODUCTIONS:1-800-243-5020
This guide may be photocopied for free distribution without restriction.